

Message Text

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67

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 EB-11 SAJ-01 ACDA-19 IO-14 DRC-01 MC-02

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P 231007Z JAN 73

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 557

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI PRIORITY

USLO PEKING PRIORITY

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 858

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PFOR, RP, CH

SUBJECT: SPRATLEY ISLANDS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

REF: MANILA 775

SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS CARLOS ROMULO CONVEYED
FOLLOWING AIDE MEMOIRE ON SPRATLY ISLANDS TO
AMBASSADOR JANUARY 23, SUBSTANCE OF WHICH IS VERBATIM
STATEMENT MARCOS READ TO PRESS CONFERENCE
JULY 10, 1971. EMBASSY COMMENT SEPTTEL.
BEGIN TEXT

1. THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL MET TODAY TO CONSIDER
THE SITUATION OBTAINING IN ONE OF THE SPRATLEY ISLAND
GROUP AS IT AFFECTS OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.

2. THE COUNCIL HAS VERIFIED THAT ONE OF THESE ISLANDS--
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THE ISLAND OF ITU ABA, KNOWN TO US AS LIGAW--IS NOW UNDER

OCCUPATION BY NATIONALIST CHINESE FORCES WHO HAVE FORTIFIED THE ISLAND WITH GUN EMPLACEMENT AND WHO HAVE ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, FIRED WARNING SHOTS ON RECONNAISSANCE AIRCRAFT AND MARITIME VESSELS.

3. THE COUNCIL IS OF THE UNANIMOUS OPINION THAT BECAUSE OF THE FAST PACE OF DEVELOPMENTS IN THE REGION AND BECAUSE OF THE PROXIMITY TO THE ISLAND TO OUR NATIONAL TERRITORY ITS OCCUPATION BY A FOREIGN POWER CONSTITUTES A SERIOUS THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY.

4. THE ISLAND HAS A STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE TO THE SECURITY OF THE PHILIPPINES. IT IS LOCATED 489 MILES FROM MANILA, 960 MILES FROM TAIPEI AND 470 MILES FROM SAIGON. IT LIES IN THE DIRECT PATH OF THE SEA AND AIRLINES BETWEEN INDOCHINA, THE ISLANDS OF BORNEO AND INDONESIA ON THE SOUTH AND CHINESE MAINLAND AND THE PARACELES ON THE NORTH. DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR IT WAS USED AS A STAGING AREA IN THE INVASION OF THE PHILIPPINE BY THE JAPANESE.

5. IN 1957, WE AFFIRMED THAT THE SPRATLEY ISLAND GROUP FALLS UNDER THE DE FACTO TRUSTEESHIP OF THE ALLIED POWERS BY VIRTUE OF THE JAPANESE PEACE TREATY SIGNED AND CONCLUDED IN SAN FRANCISCO ON SEPTEMBER 8, 1951, WHEREBY JAPAN RENOUNCED ALL HER RIGHTS, TITLE AND CLAIM TO THESE ISLANDS. BY VIRTUE OF THAT TRUSTEESHIP NO ONE MAY INTRODUCE TROOPS ON ANY OF THESE ISLANDS WITHOUT THE PERMISSION AND CONSENT OF THE ALLIED POWERS. OUR POSITION ON THIS MATTER REMAINS FIRM.

6. BECAUSE THE CHINESE GARRISON ON LIGAW WAS ESTABLISHED ON THE ISLAND WITHOUT THE PERMISSION AND CONSENT OF THE ALLIES, WE HAVE REQUESTED THE CHINESE GOVERNMENT TO WITHDRAW ITS TROOPS FROM THERE. THREE DAYS AGO THE FOREIGN OFFICE CONVEYED THAT REQUEST TO THE CHINESE EMBASSY IN MANILA, AND THE COUNCIL TODAY RATIFIED THAT DECISION.

7. AT THE SAME TIME WE MUST ANNOUNCE THAT THE GOVERNMENT HAS TAKEN ADEQUATE STEPS TO PROTECT ITS INTERESTS AND THE INTERESTS OF ITS CITIZENS IN RELATION TO THE OTHER ISLANDS
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OF FREEDOMLAND.

8. FREEDOMLAND REFERES TO THE 53 ISLAND GROUP, WITH THE EXCLUSION OF THE SPRATLEYS, WHICH FILIPINO EXPLORER TOMAS CLOMA EXPLORED AND OCCUPIED FROM 1950 TO 1974. THESE ARE ISLANDS, ISLETS, CORAL REEFS, CAYS AND BANKS WHICH ARE REGARDED AS RES NULLIUS AND MAYBE ACQUIRED ACCORDING TO THE MODES OF ACQUISITION RECOGNIZED UNDER INTERNATIONAL

LAW - AMONG WHICH IS OCCUPATION AND EFFECTIVE ADMINISTRATION.

9. WE ARE ABLE TO ANNOUNCE THAT INSOFAR AS THESE ISLANDS
ARE CONCERNED, WE ARE IN EFFECTIVE OCCUPATION AND CONTROL
OF THE ISLANDS OF PAGASA,SLAWAK AND PATAG. END TEXT
SULLIVAN

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